

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 17 with the following rewritten paragraph:

It is another object of the present invention to provide a thread for forming a stent for vessels, and a stent for vessels, in which the drug can be released into the ~~body of for a~~ prolonged body for a prolonged period of time.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 10, line 2 with the following rewritten paragraph:

The thread formed of this sort of the biodegradable polymer may be spun using a screw extruder. For spinning the thread by a screw extruder, pellets of the biodegradable polymer are first charged into a hopper of the screw extruder, and are compressed and melted, within a cylinder, and the pellets are heated to a temperature in the vicinity of a melting point T_m or to a temperature not lower than the melting point and not higher than a thermal decomposition temperature. Within the cylinder, is rotated a screw on the outer periphery of which has been formed a spiral groove. The biodegradable polymer, melted in the cylinder, is extruded from a nozzle, set to a temperature not lower than the glass transition temperature T_g . The linear biodegradable polymer, extruded from the nozzle, is taken up with a take-up device. This linear biodegradable polymer is further ~~drawn~~drawn when or after it is taken up with the take-up device, to form a thread as a base material for ~~a thread and for a stent~~ a thread for a stent for vessels according to the present invention.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 11, line 6 with the following rewritten paragraph:

On the surface of the thread 1, as the base material, there is provided a drug-containing layer 2, as a first layer of a drug-containing biodegradable polymer, as shown in Fig. 3. The drug-containing layer 2 is formed by a coating the surface of ~~the y thread in 1~~the thread 1 with a solution obtained on mixing a drug in a biodegradable polymer dissolved with a solvent.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 13, line 1 with the following rewritten paragraph:

The thread 1 is rinsed with ethanol and distilled water. First, the thread 1 is charged into ~~a rise tank~~ a rinse tank, charged with ethanol, for rinsing. The thread 1, rinsed with ethanol, is charged into a rinse tank, charged with distilled water, for rinsing. The thread 1, thus rinsed, is then dried and coated with the drug-containing solution.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 17, line 14 with the following rewritten paragraph:

With use of the drug-containing thread 11, it may ~~be expected to emit release~~ be expected to release the drug for an extended period of time.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 21, line 21 with the following rewritten paragraph:

With the stent for the blood vessels 21, formed using the thread for a stent for vessels 10 according to the present invention, the drug may be carried by the drug-containing layer 2 so as to ~~be positively be administered~~ be positively administered to a desired site within the blood vessel. Additionally, with use for the thread for a stent for vessels 10, with the controllable release time period, the drug ~~may be emitted to within~~ may be released within the blood vessels for any desired time period following the implanting of the stent within the blood vessels.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 27, line 11 with the following rewritten paragraph:

In the foregoing, the present invention is applied to a stent for blood ~~vessels, vessels~~ vessels. The present invention may, however, be extensively applied to stents implanted in other vessels in the living body.